



**When the large white dog was found** at an Orlando dog park, he was so emaciated his bones were visible through his skin. He could barely stand, his eyes were closed with pus, and he had oozing sores all over his body. His wounds indicated he'd been chained.

Aylin Arditi, a local resident who'd come to walk her own dogs, saw the crowd gathered around the dog. She tried to give him water, but he refused. She could tell he needed immediate medical help. She tried to call some of the local rescues, but most of them were full. No one seemed to have the means to accommodate a large dog who would require so much space and resources.

A friend pointed her to Aloma Jancy Animal Hospital in Oviedo, where a vet tech determined the dog was about 5 years old but severely malnourished and dehydrated. Unfortunately, her exam also revealed he was heartworm positive and had pneumonia. He was given a B12 shot and an antibiotic. Aylin called other shelters and rescue groups but kept running up against walls.

Feeling defeated, she finally took him to the Seminole County Animal Services, where she knew she would have five days to try to

find another place for him. The staff at animal control was very kind to this gentle giant. One of the staff took extra pity on him and made him home-cooked meals.

Aylin and other folks who'd taken an interest were eventually directed to American Bulldog Rescue. Carey Johnson, the group's local representative, was already overwhelmed, but she could not turn him away. She got the hold on the dog released—but when she arrived, she found that he wasn't a bulldog, but a Great Dane! Everyone had been deceived by his small size, which was a result of starvation.

Carey named him Beaumont. Online fundraising through Chip In helped bring in money to cover his ongoing medical costs—people sent funds from all over the U.S. and overseas. He had suffered from the worst in people, but was now bringing out the best in others.

Beaumont stayed in the care of a vet for days, getting fed every few hours. He was 70 pounds underweight, and couldn't be treated for heartworm until he gained weight. When Beaumont was healthy enough, longtime dog foster mom Nancy Freitag stepped up to take him in.

Beaumont's life with Nancy was the best he had ever experienced. He was finally safe from harm, cared for, fed, and sheltered from the elements. He bonded with Nancy and seemed to be on the road to recovery. He was able to eat small meals, went to his doctor's appointments, took his meds, and started to gain weight. Each of his many visitors was greeted with a tail wag. Although he had suffered a life of extreme abuse, he was still able to forgive and trust again.

But even with excellent care, within weeks Beaumont's health deteriorated. He stopped eating and seemed lethargic, his eyes were glassy, and his breathing was labored. Nancy rushed him to the vet. Sadly, it turned out that his heartworm had progressed too far and had caused fluid buildup in his lungs. Heartbroken, Nancy made the difficult choice to have him euthanized.

Beaumont was only with Nancy for 18 days, but he touched the lives of so many, showing us what a group of dedicated, compassionate people can achieve when they band together. For me, though, the events raised troubling questions: Why was his suffering allowed to go so far? Why did people turn a blind eye to his plight? Was law enforcement ever called to intervene?

Aylin and the folks at animal services and Carey and Nancy did not fail Beaumont. Society failed Beaumont and will continue to fail others until laws pertaining to animal cruelty are more strictly enforced.

But Beaumont taught us what unconditional love and forgiveness are. We learned about the power and advocacy of animal rescue groups. He showed us that a single act of random kindness can change an animal or a person's life. He broke our hearts, but we're grateful to have met him. **AS**

— Denise Carey-Costa

Send us a great picture of an animal who came into your care, and tell us their story. Go to [animalsheltering.org/unforgettable](http://animalsheltering.org/unforgettable) for more details and to submit your pictures.